

DATE OF MEETING JUNE 03, 2020

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SUBJECT CLIMATE ACTION INTEGRATION WITHIN THE REIMAGINE NANAIMO PROCESS

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To provide the Environment Committee with an overview of the Reimagine Nanaimo Coordinated Strategic Policy Review (2020-2021) process and proposed engagement plan for updating the City's Climate Action Plan as part of the process.

Recommendation

That the Environment Committee receive the report titled "Climate Action Integration within the Reimagine Nanaimo Process" dated 2020-JUN-03.

BACKGROUND

At the Regular Council meeting held 2020-Feb-24, Staff provided a progress update on the Reimagine Nanaimo Coordinated Strategic Policy Review (2020-2021) process, including a draft Terms of Reference. Council endorsed the following motion:

"That Council receive the report titled "Coordinated Strategic Policy Review (2020-2021) Status Update" dated 2020-Feb-24, and adopt the attached Coordinated Strategic Policy Review (2020-2021) Terms of Reference." (Attachment A: Terms of Reference - Coordinated Strategic Policy Review).

The focus of the Reimagine Nanaimo process is a comprehensive update on a number of key strategic planning policy documents. Central to this undertaking is an update of Nanaimo's 2008 Official Community Plan (OCP), the 2005 Parks Recreation and Culture Plan, and the creation of an Active and Sustainable Transportation Plan.

Planning and engagement of these plans will be done as part of a broader process that involves coordinating engagement to inform the review and update of other strategic plans, including the Economic Development Strategy, Water Supply Strategic Plan, and Climate Action Plan.

Coordinated community engagement on these interrelated policy documents intends to maximize community participation, ensure consistency between the plans and efficient resource use, and prevent public confusion and potential engagement fatigue from multiple overlapping planning processes. The process also provides an opportunity to consider combining several plans into one document.

The proposed Public Engagement Strategy (Attachment B: Reimagine Nanaimo – Public Engagement Strategy) is comprehensive and innovative, and will provide an accessible and flexible approach for seeking and understanding the ideas, needs and values of the community at large. Assuming endorsement by Council on 2020-MAY-25, Staff will work with Lanarc to implement the strategy for public engagement over the course of the Reimagine Nanaimo process.

The Environment Committee's 2020 Workplan, which was adopted by Council 2020-APR-06, includes reviewing and providing input into public engagement on the update to the City's Climate Action Plan. At the Environment Committee meeting held 2020-MAR-11, the Committee requested a presentation by Lanarc on how they will engage the public on the City's Climate Emergency Declaration and Climate Action Plan. The Committee wanted to have an opportunity to provide comments and feedback on public engagement and survey design for the Climate Action Plan update, as well as, other relevant components in the Reimagine Nanaimo process.

DISCUSSION

To provide better context for the Environment Committee members, it is important to understand how the Climate Action Plan update will integrate into the overall Reimagine Nanaimo Coordinated Strategic Policy Review (2020-2021) process. Understanding the range of input and public consultation that the process will involve is important in understanding opportunities to better inform the public about the challenges and opportunities that will need to be considered in the updated City OCP, while trying to meet its GHG reduction targets.

It is also important to note that the current OCP does speak to Climate Change and moving forward the City will be building on this with the latest best practices, seeking an integrated approach as endorsed by Council in the project terms of reference, and recognizing that a strong community plan should have this embedded within it strategically.

To date, the City of Nanaimo efforts on Climate Action has been multi-faceted. Corporately, the City has focused on improving energy efficiency of its buildings, infrastructure and green fleet vehicles. On the community side, focus has been on requiring and incentivizing enhanced building energy efficiency, improvements to transportation through the "complete streets" program; and allowing for greater mobility choice throughout the City. Education and financial incentives have been available to encourage more home energy retrofits, since 2012.

The presentation by Lanarc intends to provide a high-level overview of the Reimagine Nanaimo public engagement process and how the Climate Action Plan will be integrated into the public engagement and policy development of the OCP and other strategic documents. An understanding of how the Climate Action Plan update is proposed to fit in the overall Reimagine Nanaimo Coordinated Strategic Policy Review process will assist the committee in providing input into public engagement on the update to the City's Climate Action Plan.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Declaring a climate emergency will challenge the City to do more to support the community to lower GHG emissions and prepare for a changing climate.
- The Committee requested that Lanarc, the consultants hired to design, and implement the Reimagine Nanaimo process, present to the Committee on how they will engage the public on climate issues.
- Understanding the range of input and public consultation that the Reimagine Nanaimo process will involve is important in understanding opportunities to better inform the public about the challenges and opportunities that will need to be considered in updating the City's OCP, while trying to meet its GHG reduction targets.

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